

## IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION COMMUNITY ACTION PROGRAM

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USAID is meeting critical community needs and fostering citizen involvement through the Iraq Community Action Program (CAP), which works at the grassroots level in rural and urban communities nationwide to prevent and mitigate conflict by empowering people across gender, ethnic and religious lines.

Working directly with communities and in consultation with local government representatives, five U.S. nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) are creating representative, participatory community groups to identify critical needs and priorities, which are translated into projects funded by the NGOs. The program focuses on community mobilization and cooperation, social and economic infrastructure development, employment and income generation, and environmental protection and management. The goal is to foster stability and improve lives by ensuring that citizens' basic needs are met within their communities. CAP provides citizens with an opportunity to participate in decision-making related to the policies that govern their lives.

### **Accomplishments**

- Five U.S. NGOs concentrate on one region: ACDI/VOCA (North), IRD (Baghdad), CHF (Southwest Central), Mercy Corps (Southeast Central), and Save the Children (South).
- 321 Community Associations (CAs) established in 15 Governorates. The CAs, in partnership with the NGOs, have completed or are working to complete 392 projects totaling \$8.1 million. Nearly 3.7 million people will directly benefit.
  - *CHF* has completed 60 projects directly benefiting more than a quarter million residents in 54 communities. Activities are implemented in close coordination with community associations and include repairing roads, cleaning up neighborhoods, and renovating schools and water, sanitation, and medical facilities.
  - *ACDI/VOCA* has completed 81 projects, including rehabilitating a youth center in Al Riyadh and repairing trash vehicles in Kirkuk.
  - *IRD* has completed 55 projects and established 74 community action groups. A marketplace that will serve 250,000 residents is being constructed, and crews are cleaning up medical waste dumps and educating medical personnel on proper disposal methods.
  - *Mercy Corps* has completed 16 projects and 39 more are underway, including water, hospital, and school renovation.
  - *Save the Children* has completed 84 projects and another 54 are underway. Projects are developed collaboratively, establishing a foundation for future cooperation and have focused primarily on immediate community needs such as sewage clean up, water treatment and distribution, health and girls' access to education.

### **Next Steps**

- Accelerate formation of community associations and new project implementation.
- Improve community infrastructure—roads, schools, irrigation systems, and water.
- Focus on broad program goals of increased participation and conflict mitigation.

### **Issues**

- Security concerns cause periodic halts to mobilization efforts for a day or two at a time and remain a constant factor in implementation efforts.